2: Castetter and Opler N, E-5 (1931-1934)1936
NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
CHIRICAHUA
MESCALERO

252 [412] to chop off the leaves, two being left for tying the crowns together, thus making transportation more convenient. The naked crowns are bulbous, white in color, and from one to two feet in circumference.

Pits in which the crowns are baked are about ten to twelve feet in diameter and three or four feet deep, lined with large flat rocks. On the largest rock, which is placed in the center, a cross is made with black ashes. Rocks are piled on the flat stones, but care is always taken that the 252 824 top shall be level. Upon this, oak *(Quercus* sp.) and juniper wood *(Juniperus* sp.) are placed. Before the sun comes up this is set on fire and by noon the fire has died down.

On these hot stones is laid moist grass, such as bunch-grass *(Sporobolus airoides)*, side-oats grama *(Bouteloua curtipendula)*, Texan crab-grass *(Schedonardus paniculatus)*, big blue-stem *(Andropogon furcatus)*, mesquite grass *(Muhlenbergia wrightii)*, marsh foxtail *(Alopecurus aristulatus)*, *Muhlenbergia neomexicana*, or the leaves of bear grass *(Nolina microcarpa)*, but bear grass is usually preferred since it does not burn readily. [788] The largest mescal crown is selected and a cross made on it with tule or cat-tail pollen *(Typha latifolia)*, when this is available, the pollen always being placed on the crown from East to West and 252 from North to South. The Indians then pray. Holding the [782] large crown toward the opening of the pit four times, they toss it in and throw the other crowns in after it. Next they have the youngest child present stand at the east of the pit and throw four stones into it. It should be made clear that this little ceremony held at the time of baking varies among different family groups and the above description should be regarded as one of a type rather than a fixed performance. After the mescal has been covered with the long leaves of bear grass and the whole with earth to a depth sufficient to prevent steam from escaping, the crowns are allowed to bake the rest of the day and all night. Early in the morning the [27] pit is opened and a crown examined and eaten. The pit is [784] again closed and the Indians refrain from drinking until [821] noon of this day so as to prevent rain.